

Homework and television viewing

How students spend their time outside of school can have important implications for their academic achievement at school, as well as for their patterns of lifelong learning, and also provides an indication of parent involvement and teacher expectations. The amount of time students spend on homework is one measure of the effort students put into learning, and can be an important predictor of achievement. Conversely, watching television programs, most of which are non-educational, affects the time students have to study and to be involved in other extracurricular activities. Examining these two measures of out-of-school activity may explain some of the differences in achievement over time, among countries, and across different racial/ethnic groups.

- Between 1984 and 1996, there was little change in the percentage of students who reported spending less than one hour, one to two hours, or more than two hours per day on homework. However, the percentage of fourth-graders who did any homework was greater in 1996 than in 1984.
- Comparisons among G-7 countries show that, in 1995, eighth-grade students in the United States and Canada spent similar amounts of time outside of school studying or doing homework. The percentage of eighth-graders in the United States who reported spending three hours or more a day on homework was slightly higher than that of their peers in Germany, but slightly less than their peers in France and Japan (see supplemental table 37-1).
- Between 1984 and 1996, the percentage of students who reported watching at least four hours of television per day decreased, and the percentage of fourth- and eighth-graders who reported watching an hour or less of television per day increased.

Percentage distribution of students who reported spending time on homework, by grade and hours per day: 1984-96

Hours per day	Grade 4						Grade 8						Grade 11					
	1984	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1984	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1984	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
None assigned	31.9	26.5	28.6	29.0	29.6	24.8	23.9	17.9	22.0	20.5	23.7	22.8	22.0	20.1	19.9	20.3	21.3	23.2
Didn't do it	4.0	3.9	4.4	4.1	4.7	3.8	4.0	5.4	6.2	5.3	6.7	6.5	11.8	12.8	11.3	12.0	11.1	13.6
Less than 1 hour	42.7	48.6	48.7	47.8	48.1	51.8	36.4	34.5	36.6	34.5	33.0	36.4	26.6	28.7	29.9	27.9	28.0	25.8
1-2 hours	14.9	14.1	12.9	13.4	12.9	15.0	27.4	31.1	27.1	30.0	27.2	25.0	27.0	26.4	26.5	27.1	27.0	25.3
More than 2 hours	6.4	7.0	5.5	5.7	4.6	4.6	8.3	11.1	8.0	9.8	9.4	9.3	12.7	12.1	12.4	12.7	12.6	12.2

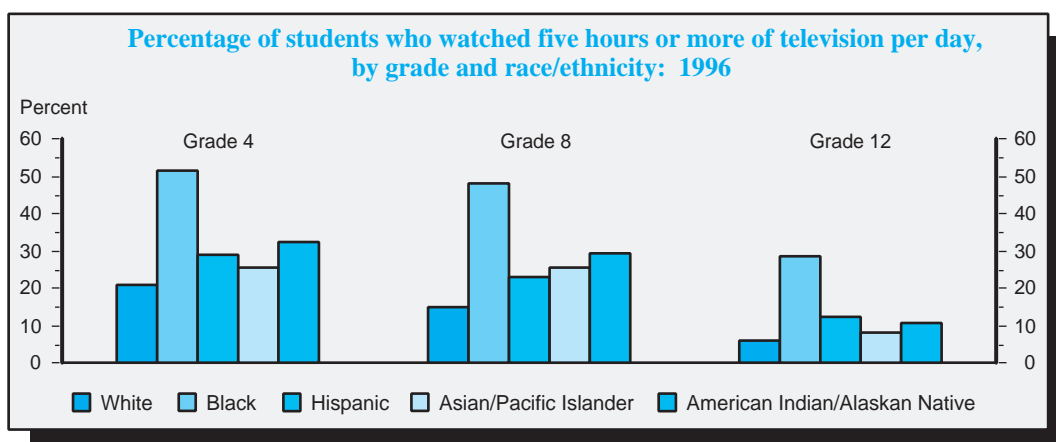
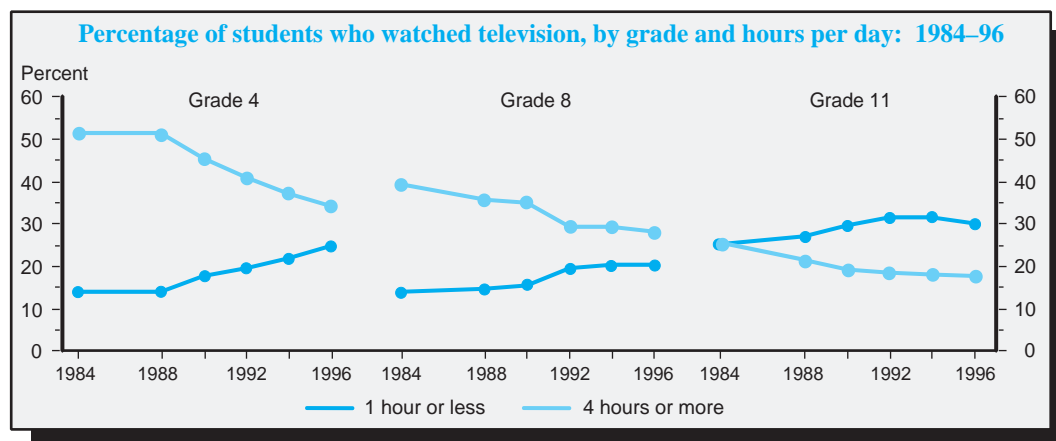
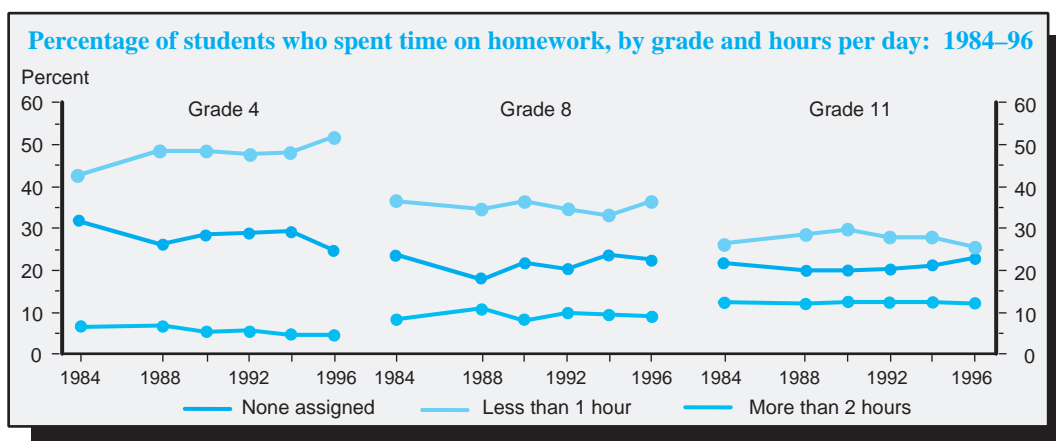
Percentage distribution of students who reported watching television, by grade and hours per day: 1984-96

Hours per day	Grade 4						Grade 8						Grade 11					
	1984	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1984	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1984	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
None	2.3	3.1	2.7	2.9	2.9	3.8	3.0	2.4	2.9	2.8	3.2	4.2	5.1	4.7	5.0	6.1	6.2	6.5
1 hour or less	14.0	14.1	17.7	19.8	21.9	24.8	14.1	14.7	15.4	19.6	20.4	20.5	25.4	27.3	29.8	31.7	31.7	30.0
2-3 hours	32.0	31.1	34.1	36.3	37.8	37.2	43.4	47.0	46.6	48.4	47.1	46.8	44.0	46.9	46.0	43.6	44.2	45.8
4 hours or more	51.6	51.7	45.6	40.9	37.2	34.2	39.4	35.9	35.1	29.3	29.3	28.4	25.5	21.2	19.2	18.6	18.0	17.7

NOTE: The data reported in the tables on this page come from the NAEP long-term trend assessment, while data reported in supplemental tables 37-2 and 37-3 come from the short-term assessment. Therefore, data in these respective tables should not be directly compared. See the supplemental note to Indicator 16 for an explanation of the difference between these two surveys. Details may not add to 100.0 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, *Trends Almanac: Writing, 1984 to 1996*, 1998.

Percentage of students who reported spending time on homework and watching television



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, *Trends in Mathematics Writing, 1984 to 1996, 1998; Summary Data Tables: Math, 1996.*

Table 37-1 Percentage distribution of eighth-grade students who reported spending time outside of school studying or doing homework¹ on a normal day, by country and hours per day: 1995

Country	Less than 1 hour	1 to less than 2 hours	2 to less than 3 hours	3 hours or more
Australia ²	15	46	22	17
Austria ²	9	46	21	24
Belgium (Fl)	2	25	28	45
Belgium (Fr) ²	7	32	21	40
Canada	14	47	18	21
Colombia ²	2	17	20	61
Cyprus	9	19	26	46
Czech Republic	13	57	17	13
Denmark ²	39	39	13	9
England ²	—	—	—	—
France	8	33	28	31
Germany ²	14	51	18	17
Greece ²	6	14	21	59
Hong Kong	13	32	25	30
Hungary	4	33	22	41
Iceland	5	46	25	23
Iran, Islamic Republic	1	5	12	82
Ireland	5	29	40	26
Israel ²	5	36	26	33
Japan	13	39	20	28
Korea	15	32	25	29
Kuwait ²	3	13	19	65
Latvia (LSS) ^{2,3}	4	35	32	29
Lithuania ²	5	39	28	28
Netherlands ²	3	54	27	16
New Zealand	12	51	21	17
Norway	6	50	24	21
Portugal	3	41	18	38
Romania ²	9	16	15	60
Russian Federation	4	33	25	38
Scotland ²	17	54	17	12
Singapore	2	7	13	78
Slovak Republic	6	46	25	23
Slovenia ²	5	36	21	37
Spain	3	26	18	53
Sweden	7	55	17	21
Switzerland ²	4	44	19	33
Thailand ²	3	26	18	54
United States	17	42	17	24

— Not available.

¹ The sum of time students reported having spent studying or doing homework in mathematics, science, and other subjects.

² Did not meet international sampling or other guidelines.

³ Because coverage falls below 65 percent, Latvia is designated LSS for Latvian-Speaking Schools only.

NOTE: In most countries, students classified as eighth-graders are students in the eighth grade; however, for some countries, these students

are enrolled in one grade level above the eighth grade. See the supplemental note to *Indicator 20* for further explanation on countries that complied or did not comply with various data collection and sampling guidelines for the TIMSS.

SOURCE: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, TIMSS International Study Center, Mathematics Achievement in the Middle School Years, IEA's Third International Mathematics and Science Study, 1996, table 4.9.

Table 37-2 Percentage of students who reported watching television, by grade, hours per day, and selected characteristics: 1996

Selected characteristics	Grade 4				Grade 8				Grade 12			
	None	1–2 hours	3–4 hours	5 or more	None	1–2 hours	3–4 hours	5 or more	None	1–2 hours	3–4 hours	5 or more
Total	2.7	42.2	28.0	27.1	1.9	38.6	38.0	21.4	3.9	57.4	28.5	10.2
Sex												
Male	2.6	37.3	29.1	31.0	1.9	36.7	38.5	22.9	3.3	55.2	31.0	10.5
Female	2.8	47.2	26.8	23.2	1.9	40.7	37.5	19.8	4.4	59.4	26.2	9.9
Race/ethnicity												
White	2.8	46.0	29.9	21.2	2.1	44.2	38.4	15.3	4.1	64.2	25.5	6.2
Black	1.7	25.6	21.0	51.7	0.8	16.0	34.8	48.4	1.6	30.0	39.8	28.6
Hispanic	2.4	41.1	27.5	29.0	1.7	35.2	39.8	23.3	4.3	50.4	32.6	12.7
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.5	44.2	23.3	25.9	2.4	35.8	36.2	25.6	4.8	58.1	28.8	8.4
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.6	46.3	19.6	32.5	3.0	29.7	37.9	29.4	8.3	46.6	34.4	10.7
Control of school												
Public	2.1	41.3	28.0	28.5	1.6	37.7	38.3	22.4	3.3	57.1	29.0	10.7
Nonpublic	7.1	49.4	27.5	16.1	3.8	46.3	35.9	13.9	8.0	60.5	24.8	6.7
Private only	14.1	55.0	21.4	9.4	7.3	50.7	30.0	12.0	14.3	60.6	19.1	6.0
Catholic only	3.4	46.5	30.5	19.6	1.3	43.2	40.2	15.3	4.7	60.5	27.7	7.1
Parents' highest level of education												
Less than high school diploma	0.4	36.3	23.5	39.8	0.5	29.2	48.5	21.8	2.0	48.0	32.3	17.8
High school graduate	2.0	35.9	31.1	31.0	1.5	31.7	41.8	24.9	2.6	52.9	31.6	12.8
Some college	1.0	39.3	36.1	23.5	1.4	40.7	37.6	20.3	3.8	55.5	29.9	10.7
College graduate	3.5	46.0	26.6	24.0	2.2	45.9	34.6	17.3	4.6	62.6	26.0	6.8
Title I participation												
Participated	2.1	37.3	22.5	38.1	0.9	31.4	35.9	31.8	1.5	50.1	29.2	19.2
Did not participate	2.9	43.6	29.5	24.0	2.0	39.6	38.3	20.1	3.9	57.6	28.5	10.0
Eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch												
Eligible	1.8	34.7	24.8	38.7	1.3	28.3	38.3	32.1	2.9	45.1	31.9	20.1
Not eligible	2.6	43.8	31.0	22.6	2.2	41.4	38.2	18.2	3.6	59.2	28.1	9.1

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, *Summary Data Tables: Math*, 1996.

Table 37-3 Percentage of students who reported doing homework, by grade, hours per day, and selected characteristics: 1996

Selected characteristics	Grade 4					Grade 8					Grade 12				
	Don't have	Don't do	1/2 hour or less	1 hour	1 hour or more	Don't have	Don't do	1/2 hour or less	1 hour	1 hour or more	Don't have	Don't do	1/2 hour or less	1 hour	1 hour or more
Total	11.0	3.0	40.3	29.3	16.4	6.6	7.4	24.0	36.2	25.7	13.7	7.9	22.2	27.8	28.4
Sex															
Male	11.8	4.4	40.0	27.7	16.1	7.2	9.6	28.0	34.0	21.1	15.7	13.2	25.2	25.4	20.5
Female	10.2	1.6	40.7	30.9	16.6	6.0	4.9	19.7	38.7	30.8	11.9	3.1	19.5	30.0	35.5
Race/ethnicity															
White	12.6	2.5	39.0	30.7	15.1	6.2	7.0	24.9	37.9	24.0	14.2	8.8	24.0	27.2	25.8
Black	7.4	5.2	43.5	24.5	19.4	7.1	6.5	24.3	32.5	29.7	13.6	5.3	18.2	31.0	31.8
Hispanic	7.8	3.8	42.3	28.1	18.1	9.1	10.6	19.7	33.4	27.2	11.8	6.2	18.9	29.7	33.3
Asian/Pacific Islander	4.8	1.7	41.5	28.8	23.1	4.9	3.6	22.4	28.1	41.0	4.5	5.3	12.0	25.1	53.1
American Indian/Alaskan Native	14.4	3.0	44.7	24.2	13.6	5.8	19.7	20.5	32.0	22.0	28.1	10.8	21.9	22.7	16.6
Control of school															
Public	11.6	3.2	41.5	28.1	15.6	7.2	7.8	25.0	36.2	23.8	15.0	7.9	22.7	28.0	26.4
Nonpublic	6.1	1.3	31.2	38.4	23.0	2.1	3.4	16.2	36.4	41.9	3.6	8.3	18.2	27.0	42.9
Private only	10.1	0.6	30.8	37.4	21.1	3.7	4.6	21.2	32.0	38.5	6.2	8.3	17.0	21.4	47.0
Catholic only	4.1	1.6	31.3	38.9	24.0	0.9	2.6	12.7	39.5	44.3	2.2	8.2	18.8	29.9	40.8
Parents' highest level of education															
Less than high school diploma	6.8	6.4	42.1	21.7	23.0	12.5	11.6	21.3	35.6	19.0	17.8	5.1	19.5	29.7	28.0
High school graduate	12.2	3.5	42.7	26.8	14.8	7.5	8.9	26.4	36.8	20.4	19.2	7.6	25.6	24.8	22.9
Some college	11.0	1.9	39.7	35.5	11.9	5.9	6.7	28.6	35.0	23.8	16.0	8.0	22.1	30.1	23.7
College graduate	10.5	1.9	39.5	31.5	16.6	4.3	5.1	21.8	38.9	29.9	9.4	7.9	21.5	28.0	33.2
Title I participation															
Participated	9.5	3.8	42.8	27.3	16.6	8.6	9.8	25.0	34.1	22.5	13.5	5.1	16.7	30.9	33.7
Did not participate	11.4	2.8	39.6	29.8	16.3	6.4	7.0	23.9	36.5	26.2	13.7	8.0	22.3	27.8	28.2
Eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch															
Eligible	10.9	5.3	43.1	23.2	17.5	9.7	9.2	23.2	33.6	24.3	18.5	4.9	18.2	30.4	28.0
Ineligible	11.0	2.1	39.3	32.2	15.4	6.1	6.6	25.2	37.3	24.8	14.0	8.1	24.1	26.8	27.0

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, *Summary Data Tables: Math*, 1996.

Table S37(a) Standard errors for the first text table in *Indicator 37*

Hours per day	Grade 4						Grade 8						Grade 11					
	1984	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1984	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1984	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996
None																		
assigned	1.5	2.2	2.1	1.7	2.1	2.0	1.6	1.3	1.1	1.4	1.5	1.9	1.5	1.5	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.2
Didn't do it	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.9
Less than																		
1 hour	1.5	1.7	1.9	1.5	1.6	1.8	1.6	1.1	0.8	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.4	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.8
1-2 hours	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.7	1.0	0.9	1.1	1.1	0.9	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.4	1.3	0.8	0.7	0.9	1.0
More than																		
2 hours	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.9	1.0	0.8

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, *Trends Almanac: Writing, 1984 to 1996*, 1998.

Table 37(b) Standard errors for the second text table in *Indicator 37*

Hours per day	Grade 4						Grade 8						Grade 11					
	1984	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1984	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996	1984	1988	1990	1992	1994	1996
None	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.8	0.6
1 hour																		
or less	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.1	1.1	1.1	0.8	0.7	1.0	0.7	0.9	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.1	1.1
2-3 hours	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.0	1.0	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.2	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.9
4 hours																		
or more	1.3	1.3	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.8	1.0	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, *Trends Almanac: Writing, 1984 to 1996*, 1998.